WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   A method of processing tobacco dust which
2 develops in the course of the making of tobacco-contain-
3 ing products, comprising the steps of:
4   gathering the dust; and
5   processing gathered dust into particles having
6 sizes greater than the average size of dust.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein said processing

2 step includes extruding gathered dust.

1   3.   The method of claim 1, wherein said processing

2 step includes agglomerating gathered dust into said

3 particles.

1   4.   The method of claim 3, wherein said agglome-

2 rating step includes compacting gathered dust.

1   5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the

2 steps of monitoring the sizes of the particles, and

3 comminuting the particles having sizes greater than a

4 predetermined size.

1   6.   The method of claim 5, wherein the processing

2 step includes processing gathered dust into particles

3 constituting granules of agglomerated dust.

1   7.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the

2 steps of making a rod-like tobacco filler, and embedding

3 the particles in the filler.

1   8.   The method of claim 7, wherein said step of

2 making the filler includes sifting a mixture of tobacco

3 fragments, said embedding step including admixing the

4 particles to the mixture upon completion of said sifting

5 step.

1   9.   The method of claim 8, wherein the mixture

2 contains fragments of tobacco ribs and said sifting step

3 includes segregating the fragments of tobacco ribs from

4 the mixture.

1   10.   The method of claim 8, further comprising

2 the step of converting the sifted mixture into a moving

3 stream and said embedding step including admixing the

4 particles to the stream.

1   11. The method of claim 10, wherein said stream

2 is a shower.

1   12. The method of claim 10, wherein said admixing

2 step includes admitting to successive increments of the

3 moving stream metered quantities of particles.

1   13. The method of claim 7, further comprising

2 the step of monitoring the density of the filler and

3 said embedding step includes introducing the particles

4 into the filler at a rate which is a function of

5 monitored density of the filler.

1   14. The method of claim 7, wherein said embedding

2 step includes introducing the particles into the filler

3 at a predetermined rate.

1   15. The method of claim 14, wherein said rate

2 is a gradually variable rate.

1   16. Apparatus for processing tobacco dust which
2   develops in the course of the making of tobacco-contain-
3   ing products, comprising;
4   means for gathering the dust; and
5   means for processing gathered dust into particles
6   having sizes greater than the average size of dust.

1   17. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said means

2 for processing gathered dust includes means for agglome-

3 rating tobacco dust into particles.

1   18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein said ag-

2 glomerating means includes means for converting dust

3 into particles with the application of pressure.

1   19. The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising

2 means for comminuting at least the particles having

3 sizes exceeding a predetermined size.

1   20. A machine for making smokers' products, com-

2   prising:

3   means for establishing a supply of comminuted

4   smokable material including tobacco dust;

5   means for segregating the dust from the supply

6   and for gathering the segregated dust into tobacco-

7   containing particles;

8   means for converting the dedusted supply into

9   smokers' products; and

10   means for admitting the particles to the dedusted

11 supply.

1   21.   The machine of claim 20, wherein said
2 converting means comprises means for advancing a stream
3 of dedusted supply in a predetermined direction along
4 a predetermined path, said means for admitting including
5 means for supplying the particles into a predetermined
6 portion of said path.

1   22.   The machine of claim 21, wherein said
2 converting means further comprises means for sifting
3 the stream in a second portion of said path upstream
4 of said predetermined portion.

1   23.   The machine of claim 21, wherein said
2 admitting means includes means for supplying metered
3 quantities of particles into said predetermined portion
4 of said path.

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